

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY  
REMARKS TO PRESS, WITH SENATOR JOHN WARNER AND AMBASSADOR CROCKER  
AND MINISTER OF DEFENSE SHEIK AHMAD AL-HAMUD AL-JABAR AL SABAH  
KUWAIT CITY, KUWAIT  
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I am delighted to be in Kuwait. During my brief visit to Kuwait, I had an opportunity to meet with his Highness the Amir, his Highness the Crown Prince, and his Excellency the Minister of Defense .

We discussed the threat that the recent troop movements in Iraq pose to Kuwait's security and the military steps that the U.S. and Kuwait are taking in response to that threat.

We also discussed military and diplomatic actions that we can take to prevent the recurrence of such threats. It is not appropriate for me to discuss details of the discussions that I had with the Kuwaiti government officials. I can tell you, though, three things: first of all, our governments have a common assessment of the threat; secondly, a military operating together jointly to meet that threat; and third, our diplomatic actions are in harmony. In sum, we are presenting a united front to the Iraqi threat.

Let me describe some of the military forces that I have visited here in the last two days. First of all, tactical air -- yesterday I visited the Dharhan airbase in Saudi Arabia. We have, in the last three or four days there, doubled the amount of tactical air and the amount of personnel at that base.

We also visited a U.S. Air Force combat and rescue detachment that supports Southern Watch and an air mobility group that is smoothing the flow of U.S. forces and equipment into the Gulf.

Secondly, the Navy -- on the first day of the crisis -- we dispatched a carrier battle group to the Red Sea and to the Arabian Gulf. The George Washington is already in position with more than 70 tactical aircraft on board, F14s, F18s and A6s.

carries, among other things, more than 60 Tomahawk land attack missiles. This is a part of the more than 200 Tomahawks which are assembled in that carrier battle group.

Third, let me describe the Marines. This morning we also visited the USS Tripoli, which is part of the amphibious ready group that is based offshore in Kuwait. It has more than 2,000 Marines there ready to fight if necessary.

Finally, the Army – we just came from visiting a U.S. Army Patriot battery. We have Patriot batteries already assembled at the Dharhan airbase, but we detached batteries from Dharhan to Kuwait. They were – a few days ago they arrived here. They were set up and operational in 45 minutes from the time of their arrival.

We also visited this afternoon, a brigade from the 24th Infantry Division, which is based in Fort Stewart and is now located outside Kuwait City. This is a brigade where the soldiers were flown in just a few days ago and joined up with the pre-positioned equipment which is already based here and they're now fully operational in the desert.

At the same time, we had dispatched about a week ago the pre-positioned equipment on ships at Diego Garcia which included the heavy equipment for 2nd Brigade, of armored equipment. And the troops from Fort Stewart 2nd Brigade have already been dispatched and will be here in the next day or two to marry up with that equipment.

One of the lessons we've learned from all of this, is pre-positioning works and is the key to the ability to respond rapidly with ground combat forces in an emergency. The government of Kuwait understands this and I'm glad to report that Kuwait is building a depot that will allow us to double the amount of equipment that we store here.

Also this afternoon, we visited the troops of the 35th Brigade of the Kuwaiti army. This brigade was the first brigade to deploy in response to the threat. This is in stark contrast to the crisis in 1990 and I am proud of the way the Kuwaiti army responded this time and I believe that made a very significant difference in the deterrence effect. A captain from that brigade today said, "This is my area. I'm not moving." That is the spirit of the

way the Kuwaiti army responded this time and I believe that made a very significant difference in the deterrence effect. A captain from that brigade today said, "This is my area. I'm not moving." That is the spirit of the Kuwaiti army as it faces the threat in 1994. I believe that that spirit and our ability to mobilize a powerful military force quickly in the Gulf has avoided another war here. That is, I think we have been successful in deterring that war. But we have not yet pocketed that deterrence.

We are not planning at this point to send any troops home. Indeed, we are still continuing our deployment and we will continue this strong ready position until all of the Iraqi troops that were deployed to the south are back in their home bases. Nobody should doubt our resolve on that point.

Now I'd like to introduce Senator Warner to make a few comments and then perhaps the Minister of Defense of Kuwait would like to speak to you as well.

SENATOR WARNER: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. First, I'd like to have a personal note on Secretary Perry. In 1969 I went to the Pentagon and in the 25 years since then, I have worked with and traveled with eight Secretaries of Defense. I've never met one that showed greater compassion or understanding or feeling for the young men and women of the armed forces of the United States and, indeed, other armed forces, than Secretary Perry.

We stood in the desert today, we stood on the bridge of two naval ships and he understands not only the people, but the most complex of systems. It's fortunate that we, the United States and, indeed, the world, that we have in place a man of his ability who can make a quick decision and advise the President and then have the knowledge of the forces needed to put in place a deployment and act as a deterrent. And, indeed it did, Mr. Secretary, act as a deterrent to spare the world another war.

We had the opportunity to meet with the Amir today, and Mr. Minister, as you know I've said very clearly the American tax payers will ask the question, "How many times must we do this?" I came here with members of the Senate three times in the last Gulf operation and I know the difficulty of working through the Congress of the United States the cost of that.

have worldwide, are more and more difficult to meet with the few dollars and the few men and women, now 1.6 million, that we have in the armed forces. But nevertheless, in the discussions with the Emir today, Mr. Minister (inaudible) and you will verify this, gave the Secretary and me the assurance in response to our questions that (inaudible) nation, together with other (inaudible) nations will step up and, not only in the host nation expenditure account, but other expenditures account, help defray very substantially the cost of this operation. And I expressed gratitude to your Emir, to your council, and to the citizens of this country that the American taxpayers need to know that and when we go back to the Congress to get the additional funds, I and others will have to give those answers.

MOD SABAH: Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. Thank you, Senator. I would like to say that we had very good discussions with the Secretary of Defense in the past two days. We had already had our meeting last night and we decided on many things and I hope that in the future we will see them practical and then we'd decide on the things which we had decided on.

We have met this morning and then the Secretary and the Senator and the Ambassador to the 35th Brigade. He has seen the officers, the soldiers over there and the morale which my brothers, the officers, and the soldiers, were in. We hope that we won't end in war, but in any chance, if our northern neighbor decides to have the war, then war there will be. We are a peaceful country. We have to live in peace; we'd like to live in peace; and we hope that we'll live in peace. Thank you.

Q. Mr. Secretary, your message today has been consistent that while the crisis is not yet over, there is every reason to believe that concerns (inaudible)? Is that note of optimism dictated by the disposition of the Iraqi Republican Guard troops in the south?

SECRETARY PERRY: The deployment of Iraqi troops at this moment is still ambiguous. That is, they have not all redeployed back to their bases, but they're all in the process of redeploying. About half of them are still encamped in the region south of the 32nd parallel -- still relatively close to the Kuwaiti border. We believe that they have simply encamped there waiting for transportation. That should become clear very soon. I understand that the Iraqi Minister of Information has stated that they would all be sent back to their original encampments. We're not going to make any action based on

statements or based on hopes. We will wait until we see them back in the original encampments before we decide that this is resolved.

# MULTIPLE INDISTINGUISHABLE QUESTIONS

SECRETARY PERRY: Let me take one from the Kuwaitis and then back to Charlie.

Q. I'm from Saudi Arabia -- I think the United States wants to present a resolution in the U.N. in the coming few days, I wonder what is the purpose (inaudible segment) or going to veto this resolution?

SECRETARY PERRY: Is Ambassador Crocker here? Would you like to take a stab at that one?

AMBASSADOR CROCKER: The resolution, I believe, is under discussion right now in New York. It's very likely to come to a vote today so there's really not very much that we can say about the state of play at the moment. I think in the next few hours if you just watch what's going on in New York, you'll get your answer. But it's very very clear that we're determined to move forward.

Q. Dr. Perry, could I ask have you anything new on U.S. troops numbers when you go beyond the 30,000 that you spoke of earlier that would be here within a week...?

SECRETARY PERRY: We have ten to 12,000 troops already either here or on the way here as I speak. In addition to that, we have the equipment for another 18,000 troops on the way. That's the Marine expeditionary force. We have sent some advance elements of that Marine force on the way. If all of those forces come over here, that would be a total of about 30,000. We are not at this time planning to send any more ground troops unless the crisis takes a serious turn for the worse. In the meantime, we still have on alert most of the elements of a corps which would be almost 100,000 troops more.

Q. So 30,000 is still the operative number, Mr. Secretary?

SECRETARY PERRY: 30,000 is still the operative number, but only 10 to 12,000 are here or are actually on their way at this point. The other 18,000, the equipment is on the way; the troops have not yet left the United States.

Q. Mr. Secretary, if the Iraqis pull back, do you believe that will signal an end to this crisis and that Saddam has been scared off by the ...?

SECRETARY PERRY: Yes, if he moves his Republican Guard forces back to the original bases, I think that will signal an end to this crisis. We are very concerned, though, that he not be in the position to start a third crisis any time he feels like it, and therefore, I believe important diplomatic action is necessary to prevent that recurrence, the first step of which will be this United Nations resolution.

Q. Are you confident he's gotten that message?

SECRETARY PERRY: I'll be confident when I see his troops back in the barracks.

Q. We know that there are more troops coming to Kuwait. So are we expecting a recent hit is coming very soon from the Republicans? And is there statement to the people of Kuwait to secure them.

SECRETARY PERRY: No, we're not expecting -- the Republican Guard are not in the position to attack as we stand. While they have not gone back to their barracks, they are in transit and moving north. Therefore, we do not expect an attack now. In terms of a message of security, of confidence-- I think my presence and Senator Warner's presence here are for some confidence and some security. We believe the situation is under control right now.

Q. Is there any stability that Saddam Hussein can never threaten his neighbors again?

SECRETARY PERRY: We believe it is important to take diplomatic action and military positioning to -- in such a manner that he is not able to threaten his neighbors like this again. That action has yet to be taken. But, as I said, the first step in that action would be a strong U.N. resolution which we hope we will get in the very near future.

Q. What are the conditions you need before you send the troops home -- during your stay here you said that they'd be going home soon, two weeks...

SECRETARY PERRY: Let me be very clear on that point. I would hope to send them home within a few weeks after the Iraqis complete their redeployment. I'm not forecasting when that redeployment is going to be. So the few weeks I was talking about was measured after an event not on a calendar time.

Q. We heard that you met briefly with Mr. Kozyrev. What did you discuss with him?

SECRETARY PERRY: Mr. Kozyrev and I are old friends, even before he was foreign minister and I was Secretary of Defense and we had a pleasant social discussion. We both expressed our hopes that the United States and Russia would be able to converge on a common view of deterring -- of condemning this Iraqi action and taking action to deter both of it. I expressed that hope and Mr. Kozyrev said yes, he thought we would be able to come to a common view on that. The proof in that pudding will be on their action in the United Nations in the next few days.

Q. Can you tell us how much it is costing thus far to deploy the 10,000 U.S. troops and if it were all 30,000, what would that cost?

SECRETARY PERRY: That's a very reasonable question; it's very difficult to give you a precise answer to it as the situation unfolds, but I will give you an estimate. That is, that if this crisis resolves in a few days, that is, if the Iraqis send the troops back, and if we are then able to move our ground forces back in a few weeks, given all of those assumptions, then the total cost of this operation will be something more than \$500 million and less than a billion. That's not a precise estimate but it gives you a range on which you can calculate. If this crisis is not resolved, and we have to send many more troops over and this lasts many more months, then the estimate is very much larger than that.

Q. How long is the U.S. willing to wait before the Iraqi troops must move out from around Nazirya?

SECRETARY PERRY: Not very long. I don't want to be more precise. I'm not making threats; I'm not rattling sabers; I'm just stating a fact, that we do not expect -- we're not prepared to be pinned down here for long periods of time waiting for action. We expect a prompt return of the Iraqi troops to their bases.

Q. Would the U.S. act unilaterally to ensure that they move or would you take them out?

SECRETARY PERRY: I don't believe that we would have to act unilaterally. We've been working in very close concert with the coalition forces both in the Gulf nations and the European members of the coalition force. As I visited the troops today, I met with British forces which are right with the 35th Brigade of the Kuwaiti army. I also saw the British aircraft at the Dharhan airbase. So we are working with the coalition on this.

Q. Is the U.S. military presence to ensure the conditions of the U.N. resolution in keeping Iraqi troops out of the area?

SECRETARY PERRY: That's difficult to estimate because it depends on the precise nature of the resolution and the nature of the implementing actions that are taken after that by the coalition. When we -- in a comparable situation, when we prohibited Iraq from flying aircraft south of the 32nd parallel, we set up a tactical aircraft operation called "Southern Watch," operating out of Saudi Arabia. That comprised 60 or 70 aircraft. That's a moderate size operation. It takes resources. It takes a lot of energy, but it is a lot better than having to fight a war. The general rule is deterring a war is always better than fighting a war. We've got time for one more question.

Q. Can we tell the Kuwaitis right now, "We don't have to worry anymore?"

MOD SABAH: I can assure you, that for all of the Kuwaitis, for all of the people who live in Kuwait, to carry on with their life and not to be worried. We have got America on our side, we've got (inaudible) on our side, and most of all we've got the Kuwaiti soldiers there ready to defend their country.

Thank you.



## Perry Reports Elite Iraq Army Is Set to Retreat

By MICHAEL R. GORDON

Special to The New York Times

KUWAIT, Oct. 15 — Defense Secretary William J. Perry said today that new intelligence reports indicated that elite Iraqi troops in southern Iraq were preparing to resume their retreat north and that the immediate danger of war seemed past.

Mr. Perry had warned on Friday that the United States would take military action against Iraq if the elite Republican Guard forces did not move north of the 32d parallel. Up to a division of those forces were reported to be near Nasiriya, a southern town on the Euphrates from which American officials contend Iraq could threaten Kuwait.

But today the Defense Secretary said intelligence reports indicated that the Iraqi troops near Nasiriya seemed simply to be awaiting transportation.

"They are in transit," Mr. Perry said at a news conference at the Kuwait airport before leaving for China on a three-day visit. "Therefore we do not expect an attack now."

Later he added that the intelligence reports were somewhat ambiguous and that he did not want to draw a final conclusion. "We're not pocketing a peaceful outcome yet,

but I am optimistic," he said.

In the United Nations Security Council, the United States sought a resolution on restricting future Iraqi troop movements, but several other countries objected to setting such a precedent.

Despite the new intelligence reports, the Defense Secretary said the United States would proceed with its plans to deploy 30,000 ground troops and that the forces would remain there until the Iraqi troops had returned to the encampments from which they had advanced south toward the Kuwait border last week. He said 10,000 to 12,000 American ground forces had arrived or were en route here, and that an additional 18,000 marines would be deployed soon.

Ending his visit to the Persian Gulf region, Mr. Perry met today with the Emir of Kuwait and visited marines on ships in the gulf and United States Army and Kuwaiti troops in Kuwait.

He also had an unscheduled encounter at Kuwait airport with the Russian Foreign Minister, Andrei V. Kozyrev, who has been lobbying for a Russian proposal under which Iraq would recognize Kuwait in return for the lifting of economic sanctions imposed after Iraq invaded Kuwait four years ago. Mr. Kozyrev's proposal has been rebuffed by Washington and was not welcomed by the Kuwaitis.

Hearing that Mr. Perry had arrived at the airport, Mr. Kozyrev went over to see the American Defense Secretary, who was dressed in casual fatigues after visiting American troops in the Kuwaiti desert.

Mr. Perry said later that the two had been friends for years and that their conversation had been social, though Mr. Kozyrev mentioned that he had talked today with Secretary of State Warren Christopher by phone and was proceeding to New York for consultations on Iraq at the United Nations.

The Defense Secretary predicted that the Russians would not block American efforts in the United Nations to establish a buffer zone to protect Kuwait.

Senator John Warner of Virginia, a Republican member of the Senate Armed Services Committee who is traveling with Mr. Perry, reported that the Emir of Kuwait, Sheik Jaber al-Ahmed al-Sabah, had offered during their meeting to underwrite much of the cost of the American military operation in the gulf.

Mr. Perry has estimated that the cost of the operation will range from \$500 million to \$1 billion. Mr. Warner said the Emir promised to "help to defray very substantially" the cost.

Seeking to send a strong message to other Arab countries in the gulf region, Mr. Warner said Congress would be reluctant to support American military operation in the gulf unless they picked up the cost.

"Our U.S. military is down to bare bones in terms of dollars," the Senator said. If the gulf countries fail to contribute the money, he added, the Congress and the American public

will begin to ask, "How many times must we do this?"

During his visit to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, Mr. Perry has emphasized the importance of storing American military equipment in the region so that American forces could be quickly deployed here in a future crisis.

The United States would like to station a brigade of Army equipment in Saudi Arabia, a brigade of Army equipment in the United Arab Emirates and a brigade of armored equipment in Kuwait.

There is currently less than a brigade of armored equipment in Kuwait. At his news conference, Mr. Perry said the Kuwaitis had offered to double their storage sites for American military equipment. The Saudis, on the other hand, have resisted efforts to keep American equipment in their country.

The Bush Administration wanted to station a division, or three brigades, worth of American military equipment in Saudi Arabia after the gulf war ended in 1991, but the Saudis rejected the proposal.

Underlining the American position toward Iraq, Mr. Perry listed some American deployments in the region. The aircraft carrier George Washington has moved from the Red Sea into the Persian Gulf, which puts it much closer to Iraqi forces in southern Iraq.

Mr. Perry also visited the Levite Gulf ship today, which he said was armed with more than 60 cruise missiles. All told, the Defense Secretary said the United States had more than 200 cruise missiles in the region.